



CHANGING STATIONS

Queues form as police 'contact point' opens
● See page 6



'I'M TRYING TO TIDY UP THE WORLD'

● PAGE 8

Protests planned as legal battle to save A&E begins

HOSPITAL'S DAY IN COURT

THE battle to save a hospital's A&E and maternity services begins in the High Court today.

Mums from the "Lewisham Buggy Army" and pensioners are to planning take part in a protest outside the Royal Courts of Justice this morning from 9.30.

During the three-day hearing, lawyers Leigh Day are to argue that the decision to downgrade services at Lewisham Hospital in three years' time is unlawful.

The decision was made by Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt on the recommendations of a government-appointed administrator tasked with addressing the bankrupt South London Health Care Trust (SLHT).

Lewisham council and the campaigners, which include residents, doctors and health staff, have submitted two different but complementary legal challenges

By MANDY LITTLE

which claim Mr Hunt acted outside his powers as the hospital is not part of the SLHT.

The campaigners, who were joined by thousands on protest marches held before the decision, have been buoyed by the huge support showed at Saturday's Commission of Inquiry chaired by top barrister Michael Mansfield QC.

More than 400 people watched the inquiry at Broadway Theatre in Catford, which recorded and weighed up evidence from witnesses including patients, family doctors, consultants and nurses.

Mr Mansfield said: "The first concern is the absence of democracy. Another concern is that, when a reasoned argument was put to the [administrator] on various occasions, we had more than one witness saying effectively they were dismissed."

The case has also been supported by a

report published yesterday by leading academic Dr Allyson Pollock.

The professor of public health research and policy at Queen Mary, University of London, notes that the administrator's proposed cuts to hospitals across South London do not serve patients' needs which "have been, at best, downplayed and, at worst, ignored".

The report concludes in regard to Lewisham Hospital: "The [administrator] has made no public health case for downgrading services and provided no sound evidence for the policy."

Campaigner Vicky Penner, a mum of three, welcomed the report by the leading academic.

She said: "The commission was really, really good. The evidence from people was very powerful and some of the impact of the plans brought audible gasps.

"The commission was to give people who have been ignored, a voice. We thought people would pop in and out but most stayed the whole day."

mandy.little@slp.co.uk

Something to write home about...



KAECHAN Nwagbo and Ruby Davies, both 10, were among the lucky youngsters given the chance to meet some children's authors as part of a creative writing festival. Children from nine South London schools joined in three days of workshops at South Bank University as part of ShoutSouth!
● See p11 for more pictures

NEW MILLWALL KEEPER TURNED DOWN OFFER FROM LIONS' RIVALS



S. EAST LONDON'S BUSIEST AND BEST BOOTSALES

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| 11 am Every Saturday | The Dutch House, Sidcup Road, SE12 9AL Sellers from 10am, Cars £10, Vans £15 - Hardstanding, Big Pitches, Big Public Buyers from 11am * Free Entry * Parking Toilets, Bargains, Food, Very Very Busy | 8 am Every Sunday | The Club Hornshay St/Ilderton Rd SE15 1HB Sellers from 8am, Cars £10, Vans £15 - Hardstanding, grass, indoors Buyers from 8am * 50p Entry * Easy Parking * Very Busy off Old Kent Road up from Millwall FC P12 | 1.30 pm Every Sunday | Dulwich Hamlet FC, Dog Kennel Hill SE22 8BD Sellers from 12.30, Cars £10, Vans £15 - Big Pitches - Very Busy - Big Public Buyers from 12.30-1.30 £1, after 1.30 50p * Easy Parking Next to Sainsbury's, East Dulwich Station P13 |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------------|--|